

FROM KOLWYCK IN TENNESSEE BACK TO KOOLWIJK IN STOLWIJK

By Charles R. & Sarah Gill McDaniel

The story of a young Dutch stowaway who ultimately made his way to Tennessee was recounted in an earlier article printed in "Ansearchin" News¹. His name was **Willem Koolwijk**, and he was no doubt the immigrant ancestor of all the people of Tennessee and surrounding states who spell their surname Kolwyck, Kolwick, Colwick, Colewick, or some other phonetic form. His family Bible records his birth as 2 Nov 1792, and 1850 and 1860 Federal Censuses give his birthplace as Holland. About the time of his sixteenth birthday in 1808, he stowed away on a ship bound for America and is believed to have arrived at Mobile or New Orleans. No naturalization record has been found and, considering the mode of his arrival, he probably was anxious to disappear. That he did, until his marriage 23 Aug 1823 to **Margaret Ann Steel**² in Wilson Co., Tennessee. He signed the marriage bond "**Willem Koolwijk**" but the court clerk wrote his name at the top of the document "William Colewick", thus being the first known record of many altered versions of his surname.

In investigating the origins of this family, we knew that Holland, a province of The Netherlands, had been divided into North and South Holland in 1806. Not knowing in which to begin we decided to try and localize where the surname occurred in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. Using the Latter Day Saints' International Genealogical Index, we discovered that well over 90% of the recordings of this surname were in one town and its immediate vicinity in Zuid (South) Holland. That town is Stolwijk, which is about ten miles east and slightly south of Gouda, the closest nearby city. We obtained microfilm records of Stolwijk Kerk from the LDS in Salt Lake City and searched for the surname. From that time on we were eager to visit Stolwijk.

This we were able to do in September 1997 after a three weeks tour of Continental Europe which ended in Amsterdam. Adding some extra days to our itinerary, we traveled south by train to Gouda and then boarded a bus to continue our journey to Stolwijk. We were enthralled by Amsterdam but captivated by the rural area in which we then moved. The omnipresent canals, tidy and neat homes and farms, the fine animals, and a few old very large windmills create a wonderful feeling. The people are sturdily handsome, friendly and helpful. Many in Amsterdam speak English, but not so many do in Stolwijk. Nevertheless we were able to make contact with a family there named Koolwijk. For more than a year they tried to help us but not being genealogists were unsuccessful. Their daughter was presently engaged to marry a young man also named Koolwijk but they knew of no kinship. After our contact they researched their own families and did find a common ancestor many years earlier. While in Stolwijk we discovered the small village of Koolwijk and Koolwijkweg, the road connecting the town to the village.

¹ Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 181-183..

² Daughter of Thomas Steel, Jr. and his second wife Sarah Allen of Chester Co., S. C. They removed to eastern Tennessee by 1808 and are found early in Wilson County.

This year (2000), we contacted a genealogist who lives in Amsterdam. A professional writer and reporter, he had been a writer in residence at an American university. He located a published genealogy of the Koolwijk family³ and furnished us copies of pertinent pages. He explained the naming patterns that prevailed in Holland at the time of our study, and made numerous trips for us to the national archives at The Hague and other record repositories. He also was our translator, especially needed for abbreviated Dutch genealogical terms. Many but not all of the Dutch people's vital records are intact. They have suffered fires and wars with their disruptions. If a family did attend the same church regularly, some of their records will not be found.

One great advantage for us was that the family name of was extremely localized and the number of Koolwijk households very small for 1750 to 1800, our period of interest. The researcher determined there were no more than five heads of families at the time of our "Tennessee" Willem. In this period the naming procedure was very strict. The first son was named for his paternal grandfather and if that son died young a later son could receive the same Christian name. Other children received other family names. The middle name was a patronymic of the father's name. The suffix "sz" means "son of", and "dr." and "se" mean "daughter of." We were therefore looking for the head of a family in the proper time frame with the middle name "Willemsze" meaning "son of Willem." Of the names available there was only one such person. He was **Jan Willemsze Koolwijk**⁴ who married **Geertrui Pieterse Verkalijk (Verkaick,** etc) in Stolwijk on 27 Jul 1770. This couple's eldest son, **Willem Koolwijk,** was Christened at Stolwijk Kerk on 16 Nov 1777. He was too old to be the one we were looking for and records at The Hague recorded his death 13 Mar 1779. A second son, Pieter, was born 8 Aug 1776 while his brother Willem was still living. Three daughters, Marringje, Gerrigje, and Cornelia, were born before 2 Nov 1792 when their second son to be named **Willem** was born. He was the last known child of his forty year old mother and the one who came to America.

The **Koolwijk** family genealogy in The Netherlands records a paternal aunt of our Willem. She was Aagie Willemsdr Koolwijk, christened in Stolwijk 6 Feb 1724 and the sister of Jan Willensze Koolwijk. The grandfather whose name she bore was Willem Jansz Koolwijk. The known paternal line continues from him for three more generations. Some maternal lines have an additional four generations to the early 1500's. The word "Kwartierstaat" in the title of the family genealogy has been translated roughly as "quarterings" and gives paternal and maternal names for each grandparents' generation as known.

The generations beginning with the parents of **Jan Willemsze Koolwijk** are:

(1) **Koolwijk, Willem Jansz:** baptized 12 Nov 1702 in Stolwijk; married 19 Jan 1723 in Bergambacht to **Marringje Ariendr. Van Dijk** (also Van Dijck, etdc.), dau. of **Arie Thonisz, Van Dijk** of Bergambacht who was mentioned 1677-1694, She was baptized 24 Jan 1694 in Bergambacht; buried 24 May 1750 in Stolwijk,

³ Van Vuuren, A. C.S.: *Kwartierstraat Kruegal: Familie Koolwijk, Koolwijk in de gemeneete Stolwijk*, 1994, pp. 41, 67, 106, 156, 214, 266, 302, 320.

⁴ Jan was christened 13 Feb 1735, Geertrui was baptized 5 Mar 1752.

(2) **Koolwijk, Jan Cornelisz:** married 12 Apr 1699 in Stolwijk to **Ariaantje Cornelisdr. Loore**, who was baptized 6 Apr 1678 at Ammerstol and was daughter of **Cornelis Jansz. Loore** (mentioned in 1627) and **Marriche Jansdr**, who lived on Steenplaats by Bergambacht and are in 1730 death tax records. Jan and Ariaantje are listed as church members in 1699, 1711. He was buried at Stolwijk 12 Feb 1723, and she died after 1736.

(3) [**Koolwijk**]⁵, **Cornelua Jansz.** of Stolwijk: Lived in Schoonouwen by Vliet; betrothed 13 Apr 1669 to **Marike Willemdr.** of Koolwijk, young unmarried daughter of **Willem Huibertz** of Stolwijk and wife **Annetje Gosendr.** Of Bergambacht.

(4) **Jan**, father of **Cornelis Jansz. III**, known only through his son's patronymic. The villages and towns of Koolwijk, Stolwijk, Berkenwoude, Bergambacht, Schoonhoven and Vliet all figure in the early history of Koolwijk and related families. The kerk (kirk) for this area is at Stolwijk. The exterior was in excellent condition in 1997 but we were unable to find anyone to admit us inside. It may even be redundant in times of low church membership. These are probably all the Dutch ancestors who can be found by Koolwijk research, being complicated by the early non-use of surnames. For us it has been a great adventure....and continues to be as we hope to expand the maternal lines of Verkaijk, Van Dijck, and Loore.

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⁵ These three generations are the last to use only patronymics and no surnames. There are three more generations of Willem Huibertz of Stolwijk ending in 1540 when his grandfather became a vassal.